Claim 1, line 8, the phrase -- with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions -- has been added to the end of step (b) following the term "hand";

Claim 8, line 5, the phrase "inward fingertip regions" has been replaced with -- a palm region, a hand back region, and finger sheaths, each of said finger sheaths extending from a base region to a fingertip region --; and

Claim 8, line 8, the phrase -- with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions -- has been added to the end of step (b) following the term "hand".

IN THE SPECIFICATION

After the description of Fig. 1 in the brief description of the drawings, please add the following:

Fig. 1A is an enlarged view of an area of Fig. 1, which shows in greater detail the triangular pattern of ridges formed on the finger, thumb and palm regions of the glove;

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application respectfully is requested.

It is noted that claims 1-6 and 8-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hutchinson-Mapa, French Patent No. 2,448,307 (hereinafter, "Hutchinson") in view of Daum et al., U.S. 2002/0075232 (hereinafter, "Daum et al."). In applying the rejection, the Examiner has stated that Hutchinson discloses method steps inherent in the structure of a rubber, tight-fitting, and insulative electrician's glove with a non-conductive, adhesively-retained flock lining on at least a palm and back interior and the initial joint glove regions, for accessing low-voltage electrical components.

The method of the present invention is for accessing electrical components energized at voltages of about 1000 volts rms and below. At such specified lower voltage ranges, a rubber-type insulating glove may be utilized without an outer leather protector glove or other protective layer. In fact, for relatively low voltage environments, it is important that an electrician have sufficient dexterity to manipulate small electrical system components, such as washers, bolts, nuts and the like. One of the problems associated with electrically protective gloves is sweat-based moisture buildup that occurs quickly when wearing such a glove. Applicant recognized that, rather than trying to make a glove that was cooler and could be worn longer, it was important that a glove that is easy to take on and off. Applicant also recognized that making a glove easy to put on and take off could be achieved by providing a flocking layer. However, a flocking layer on the entire interior of the glove unacceptable diminishes the electrician's dexterity. To solve the problems of making a glove easy to take on and off but providing sufficiently dexterity, Applicant conceived of lining the interior of a glove, for example, on only the palm and back of the hand, with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to

arguments more limiting than claims

be substantially absent at the fingertip regions. Thus, the glove simultaneously provides electrical protection and the necessary dexterity to manipulate small components, but is still be easy to remove.

Using the present method, these advantages may be realized with a Class 00 or Class 0 glove meeting the ASTM Standard Specification for Rubber Insulating Gloves. The flock lined gloves may be formed simply by spraying non-conducting adhesive born flock through the cuff opening of an unreversed Class 00 and/or Class 0 glove. Using this technique, the flocking will diminish from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions. It is desired that flocking be completely absent from the fingertip regions, but, because the spraying of adhesive born flock is not an exact science, some flocking may be present in the fingertip regions. A glove having some flocking in the fingertip regions would still be within the teachings of the precept of the invention so long as the it does not interfere with the stated purpose of providing manual dexterity for the wearer.

Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended and now recite the step of "lining at least the palm region and hand back region of the interior of the glove with a non-conductive, adhesively retained flock effective to facilitate removal of the glove from the hand with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions". The additional of the language "with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions" makes explicit what was implicit in the claim as originally filed. Claims 1 and 8 also have been amended to replace the phrase "inward fingertip regions" with "a palm region, a hand back region, and finger sheaths, each of said finger sheaths extending from a base region to a fingertip region" to provide proper antecedent basis.

The glove disclosed in Hutchinson is structurally different from that recited for use with the claimed method as noted in the attached declaration of Nestor Kolcio. The Hutchinson glove is intended to be electrically protective, resistive to chemical aggression agents, and thermally insulative. (Declaration of Kolcio, ¶ 7). To perform these functions, the glove is described as combining what were previously three gloves into a single one. (Declaration of Kolcio, ¶ 8). The Hutchinson glove includes a heavy layer made of synthetic elastomer for resistance to chemical aggression agents, a middle layer having extensive dielectric properties, and an internal layer having thermal insulation properties. (Declaration of Kolcio, ¶ 9).

One of the main differences between the Hutchinson glove and that disclosed in the present invention is the outer protective layer that the Hutchinson glove has but that the present invention does not. Because the exterior layer of the Hutchinson glove is relatively heavy, rigid, and stiff, it does not permit sufficient finger dexterity to effectively maneuver small electrical system components such as washers, bolts, nuts, etc. (Declaration of Kolcio, ¶ 13). The heavy exterior layer also makes the glove more difficult to remove than the inventive glove.

Another structural difference between the two gloves is the flocking layers. The Hutchinson glove includes a flocking layer that is intended to provide warmth and covers the entire middle layer of

elastomer. (Declaration of Kolcio, ¶ 11). With respect to the present invention, lining, or flocking, is provided mainly on select portions of the interior of the glove, such as the palm and hand back regions where sweat most commonly accumulates. The flocking diminishes from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions. The presence of flocking in certain areas makes the glove easy to take on and off while the diminishing of flocking and absence at the fingertip regions preserves needed finger dexterity. (Application, page 4, lines 23-31; page 5, lines 5-10 and lines 24-30).

These noted structural differences also may be seen when comparing the different methods disclosed for manufacturing the respective gloves. Manufacturing the Hutchinson glove involves the steps of providing a mold in the shape of a hand, forming the exterior layer by dipping the mold in a synthetic elastomer, forming the middle layer by dipping the mold and first layer in an elastomer having dielectric properties, forming the interior layer of textile fibers by flocking, and removing the glove from the mold and reversing it. (Declaration of Kolcio, ¶ 10). The method of the present invention involves merely the spraying non-conducting adhesive born flock through the cuff opening of an unreversed Class 00 and/or Class 0 glove. (Application, page 5, lines 11-14, Fig. 3).

Considering the differences between the present invention and Hutchinson, it may be seen that Hutchinson does not disclose, either explicitly or inherently, the method of the present invention. Looking to the specific claim language, Hutchinson does not disclose the step of "lining at least the palm region and hand back region of the interior of the glove with a non-conductive, adhesively retained flock effective to facilitate removal of the glove from the hand with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions" as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 8. Hutchinson also does not disclose "accessing said electrical components with said tightly gloved hand" as recited in those claims.

Daum et al. does not make up for the deficiencies of Hutchinson. Daum et al discloses a sensor material for fabricating instrumented clothing. Daum et al. acknowledges in the background of the invention that gloves of the type addressed in Daum often are made of heavy rubber and there is a build up of sweat inside the glove. Paragraph 0006. While recognizing that it is common for the user to have to take a rest from using the glove, Daum et al teaches away from this as a solution to the problem. Rather, Daum et al. teaches that by forming a glove of particular material, the glove can be used for a prolonged duration. Paragraphs 0006 and 0011. Nowhere in Daum is it suggested that an electrically protective glove may be produced that is easy to take on and off by providing lining to certain or select areas of the glove's interior.

For the reasons given above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 8 are patentable over Hutchinson in view of Daum et al. Claims 2-6, dependent on claim 1, and 9-13, dependent on claim 8, are patentable for the reasons given above.

It further is noted that claims 7 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hutchinson in view of Daum et al. and further in view of Barnett. Barnett is cited by the Examiner as teaching a glove with an adhesive born flock layer which is applied by spraying. For the reasons cited above, Applicant first submits that claims 1 and 8 of the present invention are not disclosed or rendered obvious by Hutchinson, Daum, et al., or the combination of Hutchinson and Daum et al. Barnett does not make up for the deficiencies of Hutchinson and Daum et al. The glove described in Barnett, et al., is one intended for clean room fabrication of presumably electrical components, and its function is to protect electrical equipment from contamination. The objective of the present method is to make it easy to take the gloves off as opposed to the glove of Barnett, et al., which is flocked to make it comfortable. Barnett does not disclose partially flocking a glove's interior for the purpose of easy removal while maintaining dexterity. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 7, dependent on claim 1, and claim 14, dependent on claim 8, are patentable over Hutchinson, Daum et al., and Barnett.

No new matter is added by virtue of the claim amendments. Moreover, such claim amendments are editorial in nature as the additional language added to the claims simply makes explicit what was implicit in the claims as originally filed. Accordingly, Applicants assert that no claims have been narrowed with the meaning of *Festo* (*Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kabushiki Co.*, __ US __, 112 S.Ct. 1831, 152 L.Ed.2d 944, 62 USPQ2d 1705 (2002)). See also *Interactive Pictures Corp. v. Infinite Pictures Inc.*, Fed Cir., No. 01-1029, December 20, 2001 (addition of the words "transform calculation" was not a narrowing amendment because that addition did nothing more than make express what had been implicit in the claim as originally worded).

In view of the amendments and remarks submitted herewith, allowance of the claims and passage to issue of this application respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 4, 2003

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited on March 5, 2003 with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

Box Non-Fee Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Jane Keeney

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MARKED-UP SET OF AMENDED CLAIMS
SERIAL NO. 09/954,788

1. (Twice Amended) The method for accessing electrical components energized at voltages of about 500 volts rms and below, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing at least one tightly fittable rubber insulating glove effective to electrically insulate a gloved hand from said electrical components, said glove having [inward fingertip regions] a palm region, a hand back region, and finger sheaths, each of said finger sheaths extending from a base region to a fingertip region;

(b) lining at least the palm region and hand back region of the interior of the glove with a non-conductive, adhesively retained flock effective to facilitate removal of the glove from the hand with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions;

(c) placing said lined glove on the hand to provide a tightly fitting gloved hand;

(d) accessing said electrical components with said gloved hand; and

(e) periodically removing said glove from said gloved hand to cool and remove moisture from the hand and glove and thereafter replacing said glove upon said hand.

8. (Twice Amended) The method for accessing electrical components energized at voltages of less than about 1000 volts rms, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing at least one tightly fittable rubber insulating glove effective to electrically insulate a gloved hand from said electrical components, said glove having [inward fingertip regions] a palm region, a hand back region, and finger sheaths, each of said finger sheaths extending from a base region to a fingertip region;

(b) lining at least the palm region and hand back region of the interior of the glove with a non-conductive adhesively retained flock effective to facilitate removal of the glove from the hand with the flock diminishing from the bases of the finger sheaths to be substantially absent at the fingertip regions;

(c) placing said lined glove on the hand to provide a tightly fitting gloved hand;

(d) accessing said electrical components with said tightly gloved hand; and

(e) periodically removing said glove from said gloved hand to cool and remove moisture from the hand and glove and thereafter replacing said glove upon said hand.